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ADVANCEMENT OF WOMEN

Preparations for the Fourth World Conference on Women: Action for Equality, Development and Peace

Report of the Secretary-General

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INTRODUCTION

1. At its forty-eighth session, the General Assembly, in its resolution 48/108 on the implementation of the Nairobi Forward-looking Strategies for the Advancement of Women, requested the Secretary-General to report to the Assembly, at its forty-ninth session, on measures taken to implement that resolution. The present report contains information on the status of preparations for the Fourth World Conference on Women: Action for Equality, Development and Peace of which the Secretariat has been apprised, at the national, regional and international levels as well as at the level of non-governmental organizations. The report mainly covers the period from January to August 1994; it updates the report on preparations for the Conference that was submitted to the Commission on the Status of Women at its thirty-eighth session (E/CN.6/1994/9 and Corr.1).

I. CONFERENCE PREPARATIONS

A. Conference secretariat

2. The Division for the Advancement of Women of the United Nations Secretariat, as the core secretariat for the Fourth World Conference on Women (hereinafter referred to as the Conference secretariat), was further reinforced as of 1 March 1994 by the appointment by the Secretary-General of the United Nations of a Deputy Secretary-General of the Conference to support the Secretary-General of the Conference in all aspects of Conference preparations, in particular with regard to the financial and administrative dimensions pertaining to Conference preparations and the Division for the Advancement of Women.

3. A number of additional staff members, funded from extrabudgetary resources or seconded to the Conference secretariat from other parts of the United Nations system, are currently working in the Conference secretariat, thus strengthening the resources available within the Division in several strategic areas, including regional outreach and liaison, information and communication, and non-governmental organizations activities. As necessary, short-term consultants, research associates and interns have assisted and continue to assist in the implementation of specific tasks, including the preparation of background material for publications such as the forthcoming updates of the World Survey on the Role of Women in Development 1/ and the World's Women 1970-1990: Trends and Statistics, 2/ as well as for the draft Platform for Action that is to emanate from the Conference.

4. Organizational arrangements and staff work assignments have been consolidated to provide for full and effective use of resources, staff qualifications and experience to prepare for the Conference and achieve its objectives.

5. As part of the Department for Policy Coordination and Sustainable Development, the Conference secretariat participates in efforts to ensure that gender is appropriately reflected throughout the work of the Department,

including the preparations for the World Summit for Social Development, the secretariat of which is also located in the Department.

6. The Conference secretariat continues to cooperate closely with the secretariats of the International Conference on Population and Development and the fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations.

7. The Eighteenth Ad Hoc Inter-agency Meeting on Women (see ACC/1994/8), for which the Conference secretariat served as secretariat, was held on 3 and 4 March 1994 at United Nations Headquarters, immediately preceding the thirty-eighth session of the Commission on the Status of Women (see E/1994/27). A total of 32 organizations, funds and programmes of the United Nations system participated in the Meeting. The main work of the Meeting centred on the preparations for the Conference, including discussions of the preparatory process at the national, regional and global levels, the draft Platform for Action, and the second review and appraisal of progress made in the implementation of the Nairobi Forward-looking Strategies for the Advancement of Women. Particular emphasis was placed on the need, in preparing for the Conference, to initiate a process that would continue to be sustainable when the Conference was over. Institutional arrangements and financial resources for the follow-up and implementation of the Platform for Action after its adoption were therefore highlighted as critical matters. A joint statement on the Platform for Action was prepared for delivery to the Commission on the Status of Women at its thirty-eighth session. A proposal was put forward to the Administrative Committee on Coordination (ACC) to regularize the Ad Hoc Inter-agency Meeting on Women after the Conference in order to facilitate system-wide coordination of the follow-up to the Conference. It was also proposed that a gender perspective be included in United Nations efforts to formulate an agenda for development. The preparations and inputs by agencies to the reports for the three priority themes for the Commission on the Status of Women (1995) and the forthcoming update of the World Survey on the Role of Women in Development 1/ were discussed. The meeting was briefed on preparations for the fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations.

8. The informal ad hoc inter-agency advisory committee on the Conference, which was set up at Headquarters to advise on the preparations for the Conference and to ensure effective coordination, has continued to meet. Discussions have included updates on the relevant activities of the various organizations, funds and programmes of the United Nations system, including support for preparatory activities at the national level.

9. The Secretary-General of the Conference has undertaken further official visits to assess the status of and to encourage preparations for the Conference at the national and regional levels. Her visits have provided an opportunity to evaluate issues of concern to women and to stress the importance of identifying strategic action through a participatory process in areas of critical concern to women, as reflected in the outline of the draft Platform for Action put forward by the Commission on the Status of Women at its thirty-eighth session.

10. Since January 1994, official visits have been made to the following countries: the United Republic of Tanzania, Kuwait, Namibia, Zambia, Kenya, Senegal, China, Argentina, Brazil, Netherlands Antilles, Cuba and Barbados. The

Secretary-General of the Conference has also participated in several major meetings, at which she provided briefings on the Conference and its preparations and highlighted the strategic dimensions of a gender perspective in specific areas. Among others, she addressed the following meetings:

(a) The fiftieth session of the Commission on Human Rights, focusing on women's human rights and the appointment of a special rapporteur on violence against women, its causes and consequences (Geneva);

(b) The International Steering Committee on the Economic Advancement of Rural Women (Brussels);

(c) The National Conference on Environment and Development, convened by the Evert Vermeer Foundation (The Hague);

(d) The Global Commission on Women's Health (Geneva);

(e) The regional forum on the theme "Women in the Americas: participation and development", sponsored by the Inter-American Development Bank (Guadalajara, Mexico);

(f) The North-South Round Table (Mexico City);

(g) The International Conference on the theme "Towards the enhancement of women's legal rights" (Kuwait);

(h) The meeting of the European Union held in preparation for the Fourth World Conference on Women (Toledo, Spain);

(i) The Second Asian and Pacific Ministerial Conference on Women in Development (Jakarta);

(j) The Caribbean Subregional Meeting held by the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC), the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) and the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM) preparatory to the Fourth World Conference on Women (Curacao, Netherlands Antilles).

11. The Secretary-General of the Conference has continued to seek additional voluntary contributions to the Trust Fund for Conference preparations, including national- and regional-level activities, and for the participation of least developed countries in the Conference and its preparatory meetings, as requested in General Assembly resolution A/48/108 (para. 26). She has appealed to donors to either contribute additional funds for that purpose or assist recipient countries on a bilateral basis. The participation of the largest possible number of governmental representatives at the regional preparatory conferences and the thirty-ninth session of the Commission on the Status of Women is considered to be of paramount importance.

12. The Secretary-General of the Conference has endeavoured to support the convening of the regional preparatory conferences, as requested in General Assembly resolution A/48/108: she has held consultations on the financial and other arrangements for those events to ensure their effectiveness.

13. The facilitation initiative of the Expert Group on Women in Development - a subsidiary body of the Development Assistance Committee (DAC) of the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) - is coordinating OECD members' support to developing countries in their preparations for the Conference so as to ensure an equitable spread and optimal use of scarce human and financial resources. In conjunction with the thirty-eighth session of the Commission on the Status of Women, in March 1994, a joint meeting of the Women in Development (WID) coordinators of multilateral organizations and members of the OECD/DAC Expert Group on Women in Development was held. The aim was to further strengthen cooperation and coordination, especially at the national and regional levels, as well as to identify the best use for available resources. The presence and participation of representatives of the regional commissions and of DAC/WID regional focal points proved to be particularly useful.

14. The report of the Secretary-General on the implementation of the Forward-looking Strategies for the Advancement of Women (A/49/349) contains an assessment of recent developments that are relevant to the priority themes to be considered by the Commission on the Status of Women at its thirty-ninth session and will be developed through the convening of expert groups and seminars. The results of those deliberations will be incorporated into the Conference preparations, as appropriate.

15. Furthermore, the Conference secretariat has participated in and contributed to a number of meetings considered to be of relevance for drafting documentation requested by the intergovernmental bodies in the preparatory process, including the following:

(a) The Ninety-first Inter-Parliamentary Conference, which adopted a plan of action to correct present imbalances in the participation of men and women in political life;

(b) An Economic Commission for Europe (ECE) workshop on capacity-building for the advancement of women;

(c) An ECE consultation of governmental experts on the expected outcome of the high-level regional preparatory meeting for Europe;

(d) The second General Assembly of the Forum for African Women Educationalists (FAWE);

(e) An expert group on women and global economic restructuring convened by the North-South Institute.

16. The Conference secretariat is planning or will participate in the following selected number of events, which are of direct relevance to overall Conference preparations or to the preparation of Conference documentation:

(a) A round table on women and poverty with the German Development Foundation;

(b) An expert group on gender and education and training (priority theme);

(c) An expert group on women in economic decision-making (priority theme);

(d) An expert group on gender and international decision-making (priority theme).

17. As a complementary action, the World Health Organization (WHO) is planning a round table on women and reproductive health in collaboration with the Conference secretariat.

18. The Conference secretariat closely monitors preparations for the regional preparatory meetings. It must and will continue to lend support to the convening of such meetings and will participate in them, as appropriate. The results of the regional preparatory meetings are being taken into account by the Conference secretariat in the further development of the draft Platform for Action, in accordance with resolution 38/10 of the Commission on the Status on Women.

19. In accordance with the same resolution, the Secretary-General convened, after discussions with the Bureau, an informal open-ended consultation to exchange views on the draft Platform for Action during the consideration of the item on the advancement of women at the substantive session of 1994 of the Economic and Social Council. A briefing note was prepared by the secretariat informing Member States about its work to further develop the draft Platform for Action for presentation to the Commission on the Status of Women at its thirty-ninth session, which is being undertaken in conjunction with the preparation of other Conference documentation.

20. The consultation took place on 18 July 1994. In addition to the briefing note, the Secretary-General of the Conference gave an oral progress report on the activities of the Conference secretariat. During the consultation, a large number of delegations made comments and further clarifications were provided by the Secretary-General of the Conference on the issues raised. The exchange of views addressed, inter alia, the question of participation in Conference preparations at all levels, the sources and modalities of input into the process of documents preparation, and the development of various sections of the draft Platform for Action. The content and timing of an open-ended informal consultation to be held in conjunction with the forty-ninth session of the General Assembly was also discussed.

21. The Secretary-General of the United Nations convened an Advisory Group of Eminent Persons, which met in May 1994, to provide advice on preparations for the Fourth World Conference on Women.

22. The Conference secretariat has developed a strategy to ensure the involvement of young people in the Conference and its preparatory process. The strategy aims to bring together young people at regional and international levels with the objective of capturing the voices of youth in a way that will not only influence Conference deliberations but will also have a sustainable impact. As part of the strategy, a youth consultative group meeting was convened from 1 to 5 February 1994 in Princeton, United States of America, and a regional youth workshop was organized in conjunction with the Second Asia and Pacific Ministerial Conference in Jakarta. Similar workshops are planned in

conjunction with the other regional preparatory meetings. The Conference secretariat is also collaborating with various United Nations agencies and with the Department of Public Information of the United Nations Secretariat to involve young people in Conference preparations.

23. At its thirty-eighth session, the Commission on the Status of Women accredited for participation in the Conference 102 non-governmental organizations that are not in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council or on its roster. Since then, the Conference secretariat has received well over 500 additional requests for accreditation, which are being preliminarily evaluated by the secretariat, in accordance with General Assembly resolution 48/108, for submission for accreditation to the Commission at its thirty-ninth session.

24. The application form for the accreditation of non-governmental organizations to participate in the Conference, which was developed by the secretariat, has been widely distributed among non-governmental organizations in all regions. In addition, a note verbale of 23 May 1994 was sent to all Member States and observers inviting them to alert relevant non-governmental organizations.

25. The Conference secretariat continues to receive a large number of requests from non-governmental organizations for information about the Conference and its preparatory process, as well as the participation of non-governmental organizations. The secretariat also provides information about the participation of non-governmental organizations in regional preparatory conferences, as appropriate.

26. A representative of the Conference secretariat participated in the planning mission to Beijing of the Non-Governmental Organizations Planning Committee for the Non-Governmental Organizations Forum.

B. Information and communication

27. The Conference secretariat is issuing on a regular basis a newsletter entitled Women on the Move, which provides updated information on Conference preparations. The newsletter is widely distributed to national committees, United Nations field offices, non-governmental organizations, Member States and the media; it is also distributed electronically through TogetherNet and the APC network. Published in the six official languages of the United Nations, it also contains a regularly updated calendar of events of which the secretariat has been apprised.

28. With the assistance of a Member State, two consultants have reviewed and assessed the documentation and electronic networking needs of the Conference secretariat. The recommendations of the consultants will serve as the basis for the Conference secretariat to pursue any necessary improvements so as to take full advantage of existing research and technology in the preparations for the Conference.

29. The Department of Public Information has developed an information strategy for the Conference and has begun to implement a series of activities as well as to produce a number of related print and audiovisual products to promote the Conference. The Department has also organized and is continually updating and distributing an extensive schedule of all United Nations system products and events related to the Conference.

30. Print and audiovisual products being issued by the Department include a Conference backgrounder; a pre-Conference brochure; a student leaflet; a Conference poster; and periodic press releases, fact sheets, and feature articles on the Conference. The Department will also produce a special edition of Notes for Speakers on women for the Conference. The latter products have been issued in the appropriate languages and distributed both throughout the United Nations system and externally through the United Nations Information System and United Nations information centres, as well as to media organizations, non-governmental organizations and individuals.

31. Audiovisual products of the Department that focus on Conference issues include special editions of United Nations in Action and World Chronicle; weekly radio programmes; and a public service announcement campaign being developed for the Conference. The Department is also cooperating with and assisting in a number of video co-productions related to the Conference. The latter items have been distributed throughout the United Nations system and to broadcasting organizations worldwide.

32. In order to broaden public awareness of the Conference and its priority concerns, the Department has undertaken and coordinated a number of media events and activities, including press conferences for the Secretary-General of the Conference; media functions targeting specific media organizations, broadcasters and journalists' circles; and outreach campaigns targeting media at the international, regional and national levels.

33. In cooperation with United Nations agencies and outside partners, the Department is highlighting critical areas of concern for the Conference in organizing special events for International Literacy Day (8 September 1994), International Day to Eradicate Poverty (17 October 1994), and International Human Rights Day (9 December 1994). The Department has also initiated a number of activities to improve the visibility and elicit the increased participation of important target audiences, such as youth and non-governmental organizations.

C. National level

34. In accordance with resolutions 36/8, section B, 37/7, section I, and 38/10 of the Commission on the Status of Women, all Governments are expected to establish national committees or to designate national focal points to initiate and promote preparations for the Conference, and to inform the Secretary-General accordingly. The Secretary-General brought the matter to the attention of Governments through note verbales in August 1992, as well as in December 1993, inviting Member States to inform him of the establishment of such committees or the designation of such focal points. As of 1 August 1994, the Secretary-General has been apprised of the establishment of 104 national committees. The

addresses of national committees and focal points are being disseminated by the Conference secretariat, as appropriate, in order to facilitate and encourage direct contact and communication regarding Conference preparations.

35. The Commission on the Status of Women has repeatedly stressed the role and importance it attaches to the preparation of national reports that gather facts, assess obstacles and identify priorities for concrete action. One primary purpose of the reports is their use at the national level in helping to shape future national action. In its resolution 48/108, the Assembly appealed to countries to compile their national reports in earnest and to forward them in time, both to their respective regional commissions and the Conference secretariat (para. 25).

36. The national reports also form a major basis of the second review and appraisal of the implementation of the Nairobi Forward-looking Strategies, which is structured in the same way as the draft Platform for Action and which provides, in extenso, the factual support for the diagnosis to be presented in the Platform. Furthermore, the draft Platform for Action is expected to draw on the national reports for action proposals that have been identified as being of universal relevance, as addressing the most significant obstacles and as having the greatest multiplier effects, and which have proven effective in national experience. Consequently, in a letter sent to the national committees and focal points in May 1994, the Conference secretariat underlined, inter alia, the double dimension of the national reports.

37. In order to ensure the timely preparation of Conference documentation, the Conference secretariat expressed its hope to receive the national reports by the end of June 1994; in the same letter, the secretariat encouraged national committees to provide, on an ad hoc basis, short updates on national preparatory activities so that such information could be shared, as appropriate. In a note verbale of 7 July 1994, the Secretary-General noted that the deadline for the submission of the national reports had passed and urged those Governments that had not yet submitted their reports to do so as soon as possible. As of 1 August 1994, the Secretariat has received 44 national reports.

D. Regional level

38. As recommended in resolution 36/8, section B of the Commission on the Status of Women, regional preparatory activities are being conducted under the auspices of the regional commissions.

1. Africa

39. The Fifth African Regional Conference on Women, which is preparatory to the Fourth World Conference on Women, will take place in Dakar from 16 to 23 November 1994. The Regional Conference will be held at two levels: an expert group meeting from 16 to 20 November 1994 and a ministerial conference from 21 to 23 November 1994. There will also be a Non-Governmental Organization Forum, which will take place from 13 to 15 November 1994 in Dakar.

40. The African Centre for Women (ACW) and the regional Women in Development (WID) structure in the United Nations system in Africa organized sensitization workshops on the preparation of national reports for eastern and southern Africa (28 February to 2 March), western Africa (15 to 17 March), northern Africa (28 to 30 March), and central Africa and the Great Lakes region (18 to 20 April). The main objectives of the workshops were to review progress at the national level in the preparation of national reports; assess the overall implementation of the Nairobi Forward-looking Strategies; discuss measures and mechanisms to coordinate activities relating to the preparation of the national reports, including inputs from non-governmental organizations; and discuss and develop communication strategies and information campaigns to ensure a wide publicity for the regional and world conferences. A secondary purpose was to sensitize Member States, educate and inform them about the objectives of the Fourth World Conference on Women and to urge men, women and the youth to be actively involved in the preparation of the national reports. The workshops targeted women from government machineries dealing with women's programmes, community leaders, experts from various non-governmental organizations and women in the media.

41. The First African Television Programme Festival, with the support of the Economic Commission for Africa (ECA) and the Union of Radio and Television Networks in Africa (URTNA), took place from 14 to 19 March 1994 in Nairobi. ECA awarded prizes to the three films that best contributed to the analysis of gender themes.

42. The Fifteenth Meeting of the African Regional Coordinating Committee for the Integration of Women in Development (ARCC) took place in Addis Ababa from 20 to 22 April 1994. As part of the agenda for the meeting, the draft Platform for Action, especially the 10 critical areas of concern and strategic objectives, was highlighted. The meeting also stressed the need for Africa to come up with its own structure and contents for a regional platform for action that would outline the critical areas of African women's concerns and interest. Delegates at the meeting adopted the logo for the Fifth African Regional Conference, which would be used for the intergovernmental meeting as well as the Non-Governmental Organizations Forum.

43. The twenty-ninth session of the ECA/Twentieth Meeting of the Conference of Ministers responsible for economic and social development and planning, held at Addis Ababa from 2 to 5 May 1994, changed the name of the African Training and Research Centre for Women (ATRCW) to African Centre for Women (ACW).

44. The ECA secretariat organized an ad hoc expert group meeting to prepare a draft regional platform for action, to be submitted to the Regional Conference in Dakar. The meeting, which was held from 27 to 29 July 1994 in Tunis, was convened jointly with the Government of Tunisia under the auspices of its Ministry of Women and Family Affairs. The draft regional platform for action includes an introduction containing the themes of equality, development and peace; strategic objectives derived from the critical areas of concern and action to be taken; responsibility for implementation; and institutional arrangements for implementing and monitoring the regional platform for action.

45. A series of information brochures on the Regional Conference as well as a news update have been produced.

46. Other preparatory activities in the region in which ECA has participated include:

(a) The first African regional steering committee meetings of non-governmental organizations in preparation for the Regional Conference in 1994 and the World Conference in 1995, held in Nairobi from 4 to 7 January 1994;

(b) An African Non-Governmental Organizations Forum on the theme "Citizenship and human development in Africa", held in Tunisia;

(c) A meeting of francophone countries preparatory to the Regional Conference, held in Nouakchott, Mauritania from 28 to 30 June 1994.

47. United Nations agencies are actively involved in the preparation of the African Regional Conference: technical papers are being prepared by the agencies in their respective sectors and they also assist Member States at the national level in their preparatory activities.

48. A United Nations inter-agency mechanism is being planned to further coordinate the preparations for the African Regional Conference. It will include the non-governmental organizations convener for the African Non-Governmental Organizations Forum, FEMNET. The objective of such continuous consultation is for all agencies both to ensure collectively that reports to the regional and global forums are factual, accurate and unambiguous, and to maintain the momentum of interest up to the Fourth World Conference on Women and beyond.

2. Asia and the Pacific

49. The Second Asian and Pacific Ministerial Conference took place from 7 to 14 June 1994 in Jakarta, Indonesia. The meeting of senior officials on women in development from 7 to 11 June was attended by representatives from 46 members and associate members of the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP). Ten United Nations bodies as well as six specialized agencies and five intergovernmental organizations were represented. A total of 40 non-governmental organizations in consultative status and 43 other non-governmental organizations also attended. The meeting was larger and was attended by more non-governmental organizations than any previous ESCAP Conference.

50. The Ministerial Conference was attended by 48 members and associate members of ESCAP, and by 10 observer States. Some 83 non-governmental organizations attended the meeting as observers. It was opened by H.E. President Soeharto of Indonesia. The meeting adopted the Jakarta Declaration for the Advancement of Women in Asia and the Pacific, as well as a regional plan of action.

3. Europe

51. At its forty-eighth session, in April 1993, ECE adopted decision K(48) on its contribution to the preparatory work for the Fourth World Conference on Women. In the decision, ECE requested its Executive Secretary to organize a high-level preparatory meeting by the end of 1994 at the Vienna International Centre, provided that adequate financing was available.

52. For that purpose, the ECE secretariat presented a minimum cost estimate of 200,000 United States dollars to cover its own preparatory activities as well as assistance to countries with economies in transition. The rather late decision to convene the High-level Preparatory Meeting, together with the limited resources available, have put some constraints on the preparatory process for the Meeting.

53. Since it is the first time that an ECE meeting at the intergovernmental level is to take place in preparation for a United Nations conference on women, the emphasis has been put on a series of preparatory activities. In particular, the ECE secretariat has initiated a process of informal consultation with ECE member States, including several meetings aimed at elaborating an outline of the provisional agenda and commencing discussion on the expected outcome of the High-level Regional Preparatory Meeting.

54. The ECE secretariat has also established regular contacts with the ECE Non-Governmental Organizations Working Group in order to ensure the participation of non-governmental organizations in the Meeting. In compliance with the guidelines provided by the Secretary-General of the Conference, ECE is responsible for the accreditation of non-governmental organizations without consultative status at the Regional Meeting. To that end, the ECE secretariat has set up a screening committee charged with examining the applications received. On the basis of the screening process, ECE decided in June 1994 to accredit a list of 72 non-governmental organizations and an additional list of non-governmental organizations requesting accreditation will be submitted to it in September 1994.

55. In February 1994, an informal inter-agency meeting was attended by 21 United Nations institutions and other intergovernmental organizations, all of which expressed their commitment to support the preparatory work of the ECE secretariat through various means: providing existing data and analytical studies; undertaking joint studies with the ECE secretariat on specific topics; and elaborating notes that would synthesize, in a forward-looking approach, the main lessons and conclusions drawn from their respective work on the main issues to be discussed at the High-level Meeting.

56. The ECE secretariat is also carrying out regular consultations with the Secretary-General of the Conference, who briefed ECE delegates in February 1994.

57. Furthermore, a workshop on capacity-building for the advancement of women was organized by the ECE secretariat in June; the workshop was attended by participants from 14 countries with economies in transition. The latter discussed major gender issues as well as ways and means of building national capacities designed to overcome obstacles for the advancement of women with a

view to creating an environment for growth and sustainable development in their countries. The workshop also provided an opportunity for exchanging information on the preparatory process at both the national and international levels for the High-level Meeting and eventually for the World Conference.

58. Finally, a consultative process at expert level was launched on the expected outcome of the Conference, which would constitute the ECE input into the draft Platform for Action. In order to provide such input, it was agreed that the Regional Preparatory Meeting will focus on the theme "Women in a changing world: call for action from an ECE perspective". It was agreed that the discussion at the High-level Meeting will focus on the following substantive items:

(a) "Trends in women's role in the economy". The item will highlight new economic trends within the region, with emphasis on how the changing environment affects the role, participation and situation of women. A holistic approach will be adopted with reference to major economic sectors, including the work done by women in the informal economy;

(b) "Demographic and statistical trends and issues". The item will allow the review of statistics on women, which is expected to yield new insights and methodological approaches. Demographic trends affecting European societies in general and the female population in particular will also be reviewed;

(c) "Women's access to employment and entrepreneurship". The item will focus on the promotion of gender equality in employment, with particular emphasis on sectoral and occupational distribution and on wages and earnings; the gender reconciliation of employment and family life; the question of labour-related poverty; and the issue of women's entrepreneurship, with special emphasis on women's education and training needs, as well as on women's access to credit and land-property rights;

(d) "Role of women in the transition processes". The item will address the specific role of and consequences for women of economic restructuring; the strengthening of entrepreneurship, including through privatization; and subsequent changes in various sectors of the economy. Furthermore, special attention will be paid to social safety nets for the most affected groups in countries with economies in transition.

In addition, the High-level Regional Preparatory Meeting will also consider a regional review and appraisal of the Nairobi Forward-looking Strategies and the issue of women in public life, as stipulated by the General Assembly.

59. As of the end of July 1994, the ECE secretariat has received a total of 13 national reports, with an additional 10 reports expected to be received shortly thereafter.

4. Latin America and the Caribbean

60. A regional meeting of organizations and bodies of the United Nations system was held in Santiago on 13 December 1993, at which participants studied the draft regional programme of action and established mechanisms for supporting national and subregional preparations for the World Conference.

61. In January 1994, ECLAC organized a meeting to help Caribbean countries prepare national reports for both the Regional Conference and the Fourth World Conference. ECLAC, UNIFEM and the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) organized two subregional meetings in Mexico, on 28 and 29 June 1994 and 4 and 5 July 1994. Participants analysed the national reports and discussed the draft regional programme of action. CARICOM organized two meetings to determine strategies and propose measures for adoption at the World Conference.

62. ECLAC is convening the sixth session of the Regional Conference in Mar del Plata, Argentina, from 25 to 29 September 1994. The participants will consider the country reports and will adopt the draft regional programme for action, which proposes priorities for action during the next five years. Primary issues of concern include women's participation in the decision-making process, power relationships, domestic violence, women and the environment, women in employment and training.

5. Western Asia

63. At its seventeenth session, the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA) adopted resolution 203 (XVII), in which it stressed the need to strengthen national and regional machinery for the advancement of women.

64. Following the establishment of joint national committees with balanced representation from concerned ministries and non-governmental organizations in all countries of the ESCWA region, phase two of the ESCWA preparatory activities includes the convening of national workshops to formulate national plans of action in the light of the findings of the national reports prepared by the national committees. With funding from UNIFEM, the Women and Development Section of ESCWA convened seven national workshops between May and July 1994 in Oman, Qatar, the United Arab Emirates, Bahrain, Jordan, Syria and Lebanon. Another workshop is envisaged for Palestine. United Nations agencies based in each of those ESCWA countries were invited to participate in the national workshops as observers. Drafts of those countries' national reports served as the main working documents for the national workshops, which were facilitated/ moderated by the ESCWA secretariat.

65. Several ESCWA countries, including Bahrain, Jordan, Lebanon, the United Arab Emirates and Syria, presented their national reports to the public by means of press conferences, thus giving high visibility to the Fourth World Conference on Women and its preparatory activities. Most of the national reports of the countries of the region are expected to be finalized by the end of July and will be submitted to the ESCWA secretariat and to the Conference secretariat.

66. Under phase three, ESCWA will pursue a bottom-up approach in formulating a regional draft plan of action, using the national reports and feedback from the national workshops as inputs. ESCWA preparatory activities under that phase will culminate in convening the Regional Preparatory Conference.

67. The Regional Preparatory Conference will include two segments. The first segment will consist of an Expert Group meeting to finalize the draft regional plan of action and will take place in Amman from 6 to 8 November 1994. The second segment will consist of a High-level Segment to adopt the draft regional plan of action for the advancement of Arab women, i.e., the Ministerial Regional Preparatory Meeting for the Fourth World Conference on Women, which will take place on 9 and 10 November in Amman. Those regional preparatory activities will be sponsored by Her Royal Highness, Princess Basma Bint Talal, Chairperson of the Jordanian National Committee for Women. They will be held in collaboration with the League of Arab States in Cairo and the Arab Women Center for Training Research in Tunis.

68. A fact sheet on the Regional Preparatory Meeting, which is currently under preparation, will be issued. Funding for publishing the fact sheet in Arabic and English is being sought, including from the Department of Public Information.

69. An informal inter-agency task force on women, under the leadership of ESCWA and composed of WID officers of United Nations agencies based in Amman, was established in May 1994 to coordinate activities related to women's issues and concerns starting with preparations for the Fourth World Conference on Women. The purpose of the task force is to avoid duplication and to streamline preparatory activities. The task force is endeavouring to identify region-specific indicators on women for inclusion in a forthcoming publication of ESCWA and the Statistical Division of the United Nations Secretariat (UNSTAT); the publication will be modelled on The World's Women 1970-1990: Trends and Statistics 2/ and will cover the ESCWA countries.

E. Intergovernmental level

70. Since the forty-eighth session of the General Assembly, preparations for the Fourth World Conference on Women have been the major item on the agenda of the thirty-eighth session of the Commission on the Status of Women. A working group of the Commission discussed the draft Platform for Action that had been prepared by the Secretary-General. The Commission, in adopting resolution 38/10 on preparations for the Conference, provided guidance to the secretariat on the continuing process of preparing a revised draft of the Platform of Action, which is to be submitted to the Commission at its thirty-ninth session. The Commission recommended to the Economic and Social Council that the thirty-ninth session of the Commission be extended by one week and that provision be made for a two-week meeting of a parallel working group. The Commission proposed that the session be scheduled for 15 March to 5 April 1995. The Commission also decided to consider the draft provisional rules of procedure for the Conference, which had been prepared by the Secretary-General, at its thirty-ninth session.

71. The Economic and Social Council, at its substantive session of 1994, took note of the report of the Commission on the Status of Women on its thirty-eighth session and approved the provisional agenda and documentation for its thirty-ninth session in decision 1994/237. An open-ended informal consultation on the draft Platform of Action also took place during the session.

72. The Conference secretariat has been apprised of a number of intergovernmental activities organized to contribute to the overall preparations of the Conference. A calendar of upcoming intergovernmental and other events is annexed to the present report.

73. The secretariat has received input from a number of such events, including the results of the African Regional Conference on Women and Peace (Uganda), the meeting of European Women Ministers (Belgium), the meeting of the European Union in preparation of the Conference (Spain), and the Pacific Regional Women's Conference (New Caledonia). The results of those meetings are being reviewed for material that could be incorporated into the preparation of Conference documentation.

F. Host country arrangements

74. A second planning mission to the host country headed by the Deputy Secretary-General of the Conference, with the participation of representatives of the Office of Conference Services, the Office of General Services and the Department of Public Information of the United Nations Secretariat, took place from 29 May to 4 June 1994. A working draft of the host country agreement and a revised set of estimated resource requirements of the United Nations for holding the Fourth World Conference on Women in Beijing had been submitted to the host Government well in advance of the mission and served as basis for the discussions. The mission worked with the China Organizing Committee for the Conference, which comprises five functional subcommittees (Steering Committee, Committee for Public Information, Administration and Finance Committee, Security Committee, and Non-Governmental Organizations Forum Committee), as well as a General Office.

75. In prior consultation with the host Government, a provisional agenda for the mission had been prepared. It provided for joint opening and closing meetings, and for technical group talks on finance and administration, including Conference servicing; Conference facilities and personnel; information; and security.

76. The mission reviewed in detail the working draft of the host country agreement and the resource requirements. The United Nations was able to further assess the status of technical preparations undertaken by the host Government. In the course of the review of the documents as well as during detailed inspections of the proposed Conference site, a number of technical, administrative, financial and organizational matters were further clarified and specified.

II. ACTIVITIES OF THE UNITED NATIONS SYSTEM

77. In general, the agencies, programmes and funds of the United Nations system continue to implement ongoing activities launched since the inception of the preparatory process for the Fourth World Conference on Women. An account of such activities was included in the report of the Secretary-General on preparations for the Conference submitted to the Commission on the Status of Women at its thirty-eighth session (E/CN.6/1994/9 and Corr.1). The present report updates the information provided to the Commission and reports on new initiatives undertaken since January.

A. United Nations

1. Statistical Division

78. Research, data compilation and preliminary analysis for the special update for the Conference of The World's Women 1970-1990: Trends and Statistics 2/ were largely completed at the end of July 1994. Findings are to be reviewed with the sponsoring agencies (the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), UNIFEM, the World Food Programme (WFP), the International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women (INSTRAW), the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) and the Division for the Advancement of Women) in the period July to November 1994. Final publication in all languages is scheduled for early June 1995. The special update will contain chapters on population, families and households; population and environment; health; education science and media; and work and power. It will highlight new and innovative statistics on such subjects as women and national accounting, women in science and the media, and women in positions of power.

79. A complete update of the Women's Indicators and Statistics Database (Wistat), supported by UNFPA, is also expected to be completed in August 1994, in close cooperation with the regional commissions. Wistat is the main data source for The World's Women and will be issued on diskettes and CD-ROM for independent research and analysis at the national, regional and international levels. The manual in preparation by UNSTAT for national use on how to compile and organize statistics on gender issues and how to present tables and charts and write up the quantitative analysis is to be completed and issued in draft form in the fall of 1994. It will be distributed in draft for use at various national and regional workshops and is to be published in final form in 1995. The work is supported by the Joint Consultative Group on Policy (JCGP).

2. Department of Humanitarian Affairs

80. In its effort to ensure a timely and effective response to humanitarian disasters and emergencies, the Department of Humanitarian Affairs of the United Nations Secretariat is paying particular attention to the special circumstances of women and girls in emergency situations. It is fully aware that an efficient response to such situations requires the recognition of gender concerns and

their concrete integration into such activities as vulnerability and local capacity assessments. The issue of violence against women, particularly in conflict situations, will be given special attention by field coordinators, who have been requested to strengthen their efforts to address the vulnerability to rape and sexual coercion of refugee and displaced women and girls, as well as their special health and protection needs. In addition, the Department recognizes the productive potential of women in emergency situations and the need to build upon those resources in designing and implementing relief, rehabilitation and development activities. In order to facilitate the implementation of the policy, the Department has appointed a focal point for gender issues, funding for which is being provided by UNIFEM.

3. Centre for Human Rights

81. In February 1994, the Centre for Human Rights of the United Nations Secretariat established a focal point to coordinate action within the Centre on the status and human rights of women, which have implications for all aspects of the plan of activities of the Centre for Human Rights. The focal point also operates within the United Nations system, particularly in cooperation and coordination with the Division for the Advancement of Women and other United Nations bodies, as well as with non-governmental organizations related to women, especially in regard to the preparatory process for the Fourth World Conference on Women.

82. A number of activities already undertaken or being planned by the Centre for Human Rights are relevant to the Conference, such as a seminar for the Asian region organized by the Centre in 1994 in Colombo, Sri Lanka on the elimination of harmful traditional practices affecting the health of women and children. The seminar centred its discussion on the inferior status of the girl child and of women, which is reflected in their economic, social, cultural and political status and in all stages of their life.

83. In addition to its contribution to preparing relevant documentation for the Commission on the Status of Women and the Fourth World Conference on Women, the Centre will prepare and publish fact sheets on the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women as well as on the work of the Committee, which will be widely disseminated in the course of 1994. Another fact sheet on United Nations action for the elimination of traditional practices affecting the health of women and children will also be prepared for the Conference. In addition, the report of the Special Rapporteur on Violence against Women will be made available to the Conference. As a follow-up to the World Conference on Human Rights, the Centre is planning the preparation of a report on the status and human rights of women, which will cover activities undertaken for the integration of the human rights of women into existing human rights mechanisms and procedures. The report will also be issued for the Fourth World Conference on Women.

4. United Nations Conference on Trade and Development

84. In March 1994, the Secretary-General of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) established a Focal Point on Women in UNCTAD to mobilize and integrate inputs from within UNCTAD to support its participation in the preparatory process for the Fourth World Conference on Women and in other relevant activities.

85. UNCTAD work on women in development and gender issues is concentrated in three main areas: the least developed countries, poverty alleviation, and science and technology.

86. As part of the UNCTAD preparatory process of the Mid-term Global Review of the Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries for the 1990s, an Expert Group Meeting on Women in Development in the Least Developed Countries is planned for the end of 1994. The Meeting is expected to undertake a review and assessment of specific measures to enhance women's access to and participation in the social sector in those countries; a review and assessment of measures to promote women's participation in the productive sector focusing in particular on the development of informal, micro-, and small-scale enterprises for women; and a review and assessment of measures to incorporate women's concerns in mainstream development, with an emphasis on the role and functioning of women's associations and organizations in the least developed countries.

87. The UNCTAD secretariat is preparing a comprehensive background study for the Expert Group Meeting, reviewing progress and problems in the situation of women in the least developed countries, measures taken to enhance women's developmental roles and constraints that are faced in implementing those measures. Moreover, a number of selected country case-studies are envisaged on topics such as family planning through the empowerment of women; opportunities and constraints for female petty traders; and involving women in social forestry programmes. A Steering Committee has been established to guide the work of the Expert Group Meeting and contribute to its follow-up at the intergovernmental level as well as possible operational follow-up. The conclusions and outcome of the Meeting will form part of the UNCTAD contribution to the Fourth World Conference on Women and will help the Conference to take into account in its work the concerns of women in the least developed countries.

88. With respect to poverty alleviation, gender issues, though not singled out for exclusive attention, figure with varying degrees of prominence in most of the analytical and policy-oriented work carried out by UNCTAD on the subject. Since women are disproportionately represented among the poor, UNCTAD has suggested policy guidelines concerning women in policy areas ranging from how to make official development assistance (ODA) more cost-effective in reaching the poor to the issue of how to create more jobs for the poor. Those issues will be taken up at the second session of the Standing Committee in July 1994. The poverty alleviation programme in the fall of 1994 plans to examine, inter alia, the role of women in migration and in export-crops production.

89. The UNCTAD secretariat continues to provide substantive support to the work of the Working Group on Gender, Science and Technology of the Commission on Science and Technology for Development, which is due to meet in July 1995.

5. United Nations International Drug Control Programme

90. The United Nations International Drug Control Programme (UNDCP), in collaboration with WHO and the Division for the Advancement of Women of the United Nations Secretariat, prepared a United Nations system position paper (available in English, French and Spanish) on the theme "Women and drug abuse", which was presented as a background document to the Commission on the Status of Women at its thirty-eighth session (E/CN.6/1994/BP.1). The paper has been disseminated to all the regional and field offices of UNDP/UNDCP as reference and will be presented to the Fourth World Conference on Women as a background document.

91. "Women and substance abuse" was chosen as the theme for the International Day Against Drug Trafficking and Drug Abuse on 26 June 1994. The Secretary-General of the United Nations and the Executive Director of UNDCP made statements on the occasion. In addition, an information brochure on women and drug abuse has been produced and disseminated to the regional and field offices of UNDCP and to other organizations, particularly non-governmental organizations.

92. UNDCP has contributed a section on women and drug abuse statistics to the forthcoming update of The World's Women 1970-1990: Trends and Statistics. 2/

93. UNDCP has provided funding for a women and substance abuse project undertaken by WHO that assessed the world situation and produced a series of three country-specific reports, namely, "Women and substance abuse: 1992 interim report" (WHO/PSA/92.9), containing nine country reports from eastern Europe, Africa and Central America; "Women and drug abuse: 1993 country assessment report" (WHO/PSA/93/13), containing 11 country reports from Africa, Asia and Latin America; and "Women and drug abuse: 1994 final report" (WHO/PSA/94.x, forthcoming), containing eight country reports from Asia, Africa and central Asia. The project also produced the report of an expert consultation on the theme "Women and substance abuse: A gender analysis and review of health and policy implications" (WHO/PSA/93/12).

94. To increase the awareness of women and substance abuse issues, UNDCP is promoting a gender-sensitive approach in its country project formulation, in the assessment of country drug abuse situation and in the collection of national drug abuse data.

95. In addition to collaborating with WHO in formulating a global project on women and substance abuse prevention intervention in Asia, Africa, Latin America and eastern Europe for 1994-1995, UNDCP is providing guidance in formulating drug demand-reduction projects utilizing women as a resource and is providing assistance to women in need in Asia, Latin America and Africa.

6. Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees

96. The Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) has taken a "bottom-up" approach to its intervention in the Conference preparations.

Focal points at the national level that have been asked to provide input to the national reports that highlight the situation of refugee women in their countries, based on consultations with the refugees and UNHCR's implementing partners (non-governmental organizations) and government ministries). At the same time, the regional focal points combine the various issues identified at the national level into regional reports that they then present at regional preparatory meetings. To date, reports on the situation of refugee women in Africa and Asia and a position paper on Europe have resulted from the process.

97. Conference room papers or regional briefs will form the basis of the UNHCR Global Statement on Refugee Women, which UNHCR will endeavour to ensure is reflected in the draft Platform for Action. In addition, numerous UNHCR field offices have planned specific activities to mark the Conference and the UNHCR public information office is planning a calendar with a focus on refugee women, a special poster and a video.

7. United Nations Children's Fund

98. The main thrust of UNICEF support for the Fourth World Conference on Women is in collaborative efforts with Governments, international and national agencies, focal points in United Nations agencies, government and non-governmental organizations. At the regional and country levels, UNICEF supports national and regional preparatory activities in collaboration with the regional commissions and other United Nations agencies.

99. The following activities have been identified as the main areas of UNICEF cooperation in the preparatory process:

(a) At headquarters, UNICEF has assigned a senior UNICEF staff member to the Conference secretariat. An internal task force has been constituted to guide the planning and implementation of the UNICEF contribution to the Conference. An executive directive has been issued to field offices on UNICEF commitment to the Conference, recommending areas for action at the regional and national levels, such as special meetings and events for advocacy on UNICEF concerns in collaboration with international non-governmental organizations, women's organizations and youth organizations. At headquarters, documentation and production of publications and other materials are under production for dissemination at the regional conferences and the World Conference;

(b) At the regional level, UNICEF is collaborating with the regional commissions in their preparations for the regional conferences. It supports working groups, non-governmental organizations planning committees, preparatory conferences, non-governmental organizations forums and youth forums. In the course of that collaboration, UNICEF provides inputs for the agenda; supports documentation; sponsors representatives from countries of the region; and facilitates media support for those events. It will provide regional networks for the Conference and beyond, involving such organizations as FEMNET in Africa, the Network of Parliamentarians in Latin America and Development Alternatives with Women for a New Era (DAWN);

(c) At the country level, UNICEF contributes through direct participation in national preparatory committees, dialogue with national focal points in both government and non-government sectors, and participation in inter-agency coordinating committees. It supports the preparation of national reports, the formulation of national plans of action for the follow-up of the Conference outcomes, and the establishment of non-governmental organizations and youth networks. Such support includes assistance to the analysis of the situation of women and girls, policy reviews and preparation of background information in connection with the formulation of the country paper and inputs to the draft Platform for Action;

(d) In addition, UNICEF will promote the mobilization of pubic support - starting with grass-roots women's organizations, youth organizations and local people's organizations - for a wider discussion, understanding and articulation of critical issues within countries and at the Conference. It will advocate for the ratification of the Convention for the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, drawing on its complementarity with the Convention on the Rights of the Child. Girl-child perspectives and policy will be a special focus for advocacy and support. Activities aimed at generating awareness and interest in the communication media about gender issues and the national and international activities related to the Conference will be supported. An important area of support will be the documentation of successful experiences and the publication and dissemination of such materials through the women's network and at the Conference.

8. United Nations Development Fund for Women

100. In keeping with its proactive role in preparatory activities for the Fourth World Conference on Women, UNIFEM launched the Umbrella Project to Support UNIFEM Initiatives for the Fourth World Conference on Women in September 1993. Through the Umbrella Project, UNIFEM has operationalized more than 85 global, regional and nationally based initiatives in preparation for the Conference, in collaboration with other development partners, including United Nations agencies and the Conference secretariat. Examples of such initiatives are described below.

101. At the global/international level, funding and/or technical assistance and in-kind support has been or is being provided for:

(a) The participation of a representative of the Conference secretariat in a training workshop for the All China Women's Federation (ACWF) in China, organized jointly by UNIFEM and the Conference secretariat in collaboration with UNDP;

(b) Contribution to an expert group meeting on "Measures to eradicate violence against women in the family and society", in preparation of the priority theme under development for the thirty-eighth session of the Commission on the Status of Women;

(c) An assessment of the impact on women of technical cooperation and lending by United Nations and Bretton Woods institutions and of the

mainstreaming to women of technical and financial assistance, initiated by the Conference secretariat and led by the World Bank;

(d) The implementation of the Conference secretariat's youth strategy for the Fourth World Conference on Women, including the convening of a youth meeting prior to the Regional Preparatory Conference in Dakar in November 1994.

102. UNIFEM subregional offices have been actively involved in the preparatory activities for the Conference on behalf of international organizations.

103. In early November 1994, UNIFEM will place a special adviser on the Fourth World Conference on Women in the UNDP country office in Beijing to contribute to effective coordination within the United Nations system.

104. UNIFEM has provided support to 22 countries in their national and regional preparations, including as follows:

(a) In India, UNIFEM is an active member of the Inter-Agency Facilitation Committee for Beijing (IFCB), a group formed to coordinate the dissemination of information on the Conference to non-governmental organizations in South Asia;

(b) In collaboration with UNICEF, UNDP and the United Nations Operation in Somalia (UNOSOM), UNIFEM supported the preparation of a Somali country paper for both the African Regional Conference and for the World Conference;

(c) In Argentina, in collaboration with UNICEF, UNIFEM is sponsoring the first and second national meetings of non-governmental organizations for the purpose of designating a diverse and representative coordinating committee;

(d) In Pakistan, UNIFEM organized a meeting bringing together government officials, non-governmental organizations, researchers and representatives of the media to discuss, prioritize and coordinate national activities;

(e) Funds have been provided to the Lao Women's Union for their national congress and for the recruitment of a consultant to draft the national report;

(f) In Barbados, UNIFEM collaborated with the CARICOM secretariat in organizing the First Regional Preparatory Meeting for the Fourth World Conference on Women in the Caribbean;

(g) In Belize, the Bahamas and Jamaica, UNIFEM has provided a resource person to the national committees and women's bureaux in the preparation of the official national reports;

(h) In Mexico, UNIFEM has supported the preparation of both the non-governmental organizations and the government national reports;

(i) UNIFEM has assisted in the preparation of the national reports with the national committees in both Senegal and Mali. Following the UNIFEM initiative, an informal WID network has agreed to jointly fund a consultant to draft the portion of the report regarding technical assistance for women in Senegal;

(j) Special assistance has been given to the All China Women's Federation (ACWF) in their preparations for the Conference. Inter alia, funds were provided for a communication expert from the Association for Progressive Communication to travel to Beijing to assist ACWF in installing and connecting their new computers. The ACWF staff is now trained in the use of electronic mail and other computer programmes.

105. UNIFEM is funding and facilitating the participation of member non-governmental organizations giving particular attention to new ones, in the following preparatory regional meetings: regional non-governmental organizations symposium in Manila, non-governmental organizations regional working group meeting in Bangkok, non-governmental organizations forum in Caracas, non-governmental organizations regional preparatory meeting in Ecuador, and national non-governmental organizations meetings in Brazil and Paraguay. UNIFEM also assists in channelling funds to non-governmental organizations to help them in their Conference preparations. It initiated and facilitated a working group of non-governmental organizations involved in micro-lending in order to develop and implement strategies that would highlight women and finance at the Conference and the non-governmental organization Forum.

106. UNIFEM has focused on launching activities at headquarters as well as at the country and regional levels that will generate wider public information, awareness and support for the Conference, including:

(a) The production of information kits on the Conference in French, which have been widely disseminated in francophone Africa;

(b) The mounting of three subregional competitions for francophone Africa for posters on gender themes. A pamphlet in French targeting young girls was widely distributed;

(c) The compilation of a comprehensive directory and profiles of non-governmental organizations in Nigeria that are interested in actively preparing for the Conference, which are currently under preparation;

(d) The provision of support for the Non-Governmental Organizations Asian and Pacific Working Group to publish a bimonthly newsletter that provides a regional perspective on the preparation process and includes a youth page.

9. United Nations Development Programme

107. UNDP continues to contribute to the preparations for the Fourth World Conference on Women through the following main areas of activity:

(a) Support through the UNDP regional bureaux and resident missions in the preparation of national reports;

(b) Preparation of the 1995 Human Development Report, which will focus on women;

(c) Implementation of the UNDP strategy for the Conference, the Making Beijing Successful Strategy.

The main elements of the Strategy are to build and strengthen national capacities through the identification and implementation of strategic and operational approaches to the empowerment of women; review and adapt gender training methodology; integrate gender and gender statistics in social and economic analysis; and increase collaboration with other United Nations agencies.

108. In a follow-up letter to the UNDP Administrator's affirmation of the UNDP commitment to providing support to the preparations for the Conference, the UNDP Gender in Development Programme (GIDP) requested UNDP resident representatives to encourage and support the coordination of system-wide Conference preparatory activities in their respective countries. In all regions, UNDP resident missions are assisting with the preparation of national reports.

109. In addition to providing support to individual Governments for the preparations of national reports, all UNDP regional bureaux are contributing to the preparations through the sponsorship of special projects, including preparing audio-visual material; issuing special publications on gender and sustainable human development; and conducting training programmes on gender and development. For example, the UNDP Regional Bureau for Arab States (RBAS) is providing support for national preparations through the Arab Women's Centre for Research and Training. The UNDP Division for Europe and the Commonwealth of Independent States (DEC) is formulating projects to assist countries in the region with the preparation of national reports.

110. The UNDP Regional Bureau for Africa (RBA) is providing support for national preparations by facilitating national preparatory meetings and the production of national reports. Seventeen reports have been produced to date. In preparing the reports, efforts are being made to capture the non-governmental organizations perspective. For instance, RBA has supported a project in Zambia designed to involve female and male researchers in preparing analytical and empirical evidence. RBA is planning national workshops on gender and sustainable human development. The reports of the workshops will be analysed and produced as a brochure to be disseminated at the Conference.

111. RBA is sponsoring an independent gender in development (GID) expert to prepare a report that will document UNDP/RBA efforts in mainstreaming women in development issues, based on the experience of six African countries. RBA and UNIFEM are co-sponsoring the OAU Women in Development Unit to identify two key issues that require policy-level interventions to be tabled at the World Conference. In collaboration with UNIFEM and African women's non-governmental organizations, RBA has also supported the training of 30 male and female journalists in covering international conferences. The journalists were also provided with skills in gender analysis and new reporting through the gender lens. RBA will participate in the African Regional Preparatory meeting to be held in Dakar in November 1994.

112. The UNDP Regional Bureau for Asia and the Pacific (RBAP) has provided a substantive contribution to the Conference by commissioning a report on gender,

poverty and sustainable development. As part of the consultative process for the preparation of the report, RBAP supported a series of workshops at the ESCAP Symposium of Non-governmental organizations on Women in Development in Manila in November 1993. Country offices in the Asia and the Pacific region, such as China, India, Indonesia, Iran, Pakistan and Sri Lanka, have supported the following preparatory activities: consultancies to assist national women's machineries in the preparation of national reports; the formation of United Nations inter-agency committees; and support to specific non-governmental organizations.

113. RBAP has also provided support to Governments of developing countries and non-governmental organizations in their preparations for the ESCAP regional ministerial meetings, including support to the Governments of Cambodia, the Lao People's Democratic Republic, Samoa, Maldives and Mongolia to attend the ministerial meetings; and to the Philippine secretariat of the ESCAP Symposium of Non-Governmental Organizations.

114. In China, the UNDP Beijing office continues to support the All China Women's Federation in the overall Conference preparations and to provide other logistical support to agencies within the United Nations system.

10. International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women

115. INSTRAW is preparing the following publications and activities targeted at the Fourth World Conference on Women:

(a) Women's access to credit and impact analysis of projects;

(b) Case studies on women in agriculture in East European countries in transition economies. Results of the case studies conducted in Hungary and Bulgaria are currently being synthesized for publication;

(c) Measuring and Valuing Unpaid Contribution: Accounting Through Time-use. The publication, which is currently being finalized, is based on the results of the INSTRAW project on the valuation of women's work through time-use. During the period 1994-1995, the second phase of the project will be undertaken, from which supplementary outputs may be prepared for dissemination at the Conference;

(d) An INSTRAW/ECE joint work session on statistics on women in the ECE region, to be held in March 1995 in collaboration with ECE. The topics to be discussed relate to the issues and themes to be addressed at the World Conference. Outputs from the work session will be compiled and made available at the Conference.

116. INSTRAW envisages the organization of panels on the following subjects at the Non-Governmental Organization Forum:

(a) Women, communication and media;

(b) The use and importance of time-use statistics in addressing gender issues. Arrangements for the proposed panel are currently being discussed with the Statistical Division of the United Nations Secretariat and possibly with UNDP;

(c) The use of existing gender statistics: information dissemination. UNSTAT is taking the lead role in the organization of the panel, while INSTRAW and other relevant agencies are collaborating;

(d) Women, water supply and sanitation. The panel is being developed by INSTRAW in collaboration with UNICEF.

11. United Nations University

117. The main relevant activity of the United Nations University (UNU)/World Institute for Development Economics Research (WIDER) has been a research and policy-oriented project that examines women's employment and social policies within the context of global economic restructuring. Research is being conducted on the Islamic Republic of Iran, Turkey, Malaysia, the Republic of Korea, Mexico and Zimbabwe, and on the Russian Federation, Poland, Bulgaria, China, Cuba and Viet Nam. The principal investigator heads a team of seven collaborators from economies in transition, who are preparing country studies on market reforms and their impact on working women. The first draft of the papers will be ready in November 1994 and the authors will be invited to present their findings at a UNU/WIDER workshop to be held in Beijing. The purpose of the workshop will be to examine similarities and differences among the countries and to suggest policies that enhance women's employment and conditions of work.

118. UNU/WIDER has also cooperated with other United Nations agencies in their preparations for the Conference. That cooperation has included participation in ad hoc inter-agency meetings on gender issues, for which the Division for the Advancement of Women of the United Nations Secretariat serves as secretariat; submission of materials for and comments on the forthcoming update of the World Survey on the Role of Women in Development; 1/ participation in an ESCAP Expert Group Meeting held in Bangkok in February 1994 to discuss and finalize background papers and a draft platform for action for the Second Asia and Pacific Ministerial Conference that took place in Jakarta in June 1994; participation in the International Labour Organization (ILO)/International Institute for Labour Studies (IILS) Expert Group Meeting on the theme "Women workers and global restructuring", held in Geneva in June 1994; submission of materials for the North-South Institute's Expert Group Meeting on the theme "Women's equality and global economic reform" in Ottawa in June 1994; and comments on the draft outline of the UNDP 1995 Human Development Report, which will focus on gender. UNU/WIDER is also cooperating with the United Nations Non-Governmental Liaison Service in its plans to convene a seminar for women's non-governmental organizations from eastern and central Europe in Bratislava, Slovakia, in October 1994, and has established ties with the Women in Development Unit of ESCWA.

B. Specialized agencies

1. International Labour Organization

119. At its two hundred twenty-fifth session, the ILO Governing Body requested the ILO to participate actively in the Fourth World Conference on Women and its preparatory process, such as the regional preparatory conferences. Furthermore, it was recommended that ILO constituents contribute fully to those efforts.

120. At the regional level, the ILO has been actively involved in the preparations and consultative meetings for the regional preparatory conferences in the five regions and plans to attend all the regional preparatory conferences. The ILO, for example, attended and addressed the Second Asian and Pacific Conference on Women and Development, held in Jakarta, from 7 to 14 June 1994. It helped to prepare the chapters on women's access to employment and entrepreneurship and on the role of women in the transition process within the report to be examined by the European Regional Preparatory Meeting, which is held in Vienna from 17 to 21 October 1994. In Africa, the preparation of the chapter on economic empowerment of women in the regional report for the regional preparatory conference was subcontracted to ILO.

121. At the national level, the ILO has been providing technical advice to the national committees. The ILO field structures have tried to encourage the participation of the ILO tripartite members in the work of those committees in order to ensure that labour-related issues are adequately covered. Furthermore, the ILO has been providing comments on some of the completed national reports to ensure an adequate coverage of employment-related issues.

122. There was a joint ILO/European Commission/Government of Italy seminar on the theme "Women and work", held on 21 and 22 March 1994 at the Turin Centre of the ILO. The seminar considered women's employment and atypical forms of work, active labour market policies, social protection and women's representation. It was attended by about 120 representatives of Governments, employers, trade unions and national women's machineries or bodies responsible for the promotion of equal opportunities. The outcome of the seminar was transmitted to the European Union meeting on women held in Toledo, Spain from 14 to 16 April 1994 and will also be a contribution to the forthcoming European Regional Preparatory Conference, to be held in Vienna.

123. Of significance was the International Forum on Equality for Women in a Changing World, which was held from 1 to 3 June 1994 under the auspices of IILS. The Forum assessed current trends and identified effective strategies and other elements that should go into a future agenda for action to accelerate the process of achieving gender equality in the world of work. It was a highly stimulating meeting, attended by researchers, policy makers and representatives of Governments, employers' and workers' organizations. Specific data gaps and areas for future research were identified, such as globalization and women's work; issues relating to the labour market; the social clause and women, as well as the concerns of vulnerable groups.

124. In general, the Forum perceived that there was a need for an integrated strategy that would involve all major institutions both individually and

collectively in order to ensure an effective approach for promoting the equality of opportunity and treatment for men and women in employment in a changing global environment. Discussion demonstrated that an appropriate agenda for future action should encompass supportive legislative framework and enforcement mechanisms; gender-sensitive macro- and micro-economic policy-making and active labour market policy formulation; skills training oriented towards employment opportunities emerging from technological transformations and the restructuring of production processes and work organizations; the promotion of access to productive resources; the improved coverage of social security and social protection; the promotion of quality employment; the empowerment of women through mobilization in groups, and their representation and participation in decision-making; the strengthening of institutional capacity and the building of alliances between institutions; targeting the more vulnerable and disadvantaged women, such as the unemployed, poor, migrant, displaced, disabled, and rural and informal sector workers; and the generation of improved data, conceptual and analytical bases.

125. Examples of other ILO meetings geared to the Fourth World Conference are: a seminar on equality of opportunity and treatment for workers with family responsibilities for selected countries of Asia and the Pacific, to be held in Brisbane from 11 to 15 July 1994; a tripartite symposium on the problems of women workers in Arab countries, to be held in Amman from 11 to 15 September 1994; a seminar on the impact of economic restructuring on the employment, training and working conditions of women for selected English-speaking African countries, to be held in Harare from 24 to 28 October 1994; a subregional tripartite seminar on equality in the East Asian subregion, to be held in fall 1994; a tripartite meeting of experts on the theme "Social security and social protection: equality of treatment between men and women", to be held in Geneva from 3 to 7 October 1994; a Caribbean subregional tripartite seminar on equality of opportunity and treatment for workers with family responsibilities, to be held in Georgetown, Guyana, from 28 November to 2 December 1994; an Asian subregional tripartite awareness-raising workshop on improving working conditions for women in economies in transition, to be held in Beijing from 7 to 11 November 1994; and a regional workshop on the development of women's entrepreneurship, to be held in Bangkok in April 1994.

126. The ILO is, in addition, producing a 52-minute documentary film, Women and Work; working papers; a book entitled Women Workers: Selected ILO Policy Documents; an annotated bibliography on women and employment; a training package on women's rights; and information bulletins on the Fourth World Conference on Women to inform ILO staff and constituents about the preparations for the Beijing conference.

127. At the international level, the ILO has been working closely with the Conference secretariat in connection with ILO technical inputs to reports and documents currently under preparation. The ILO is regularly represented at the annual sessions of the Commission on the Status of Women. It also participates regularly in the inter-agency mechanisms on women. At the thirty-eighth session of the Commission on the Status of Women, the representative of the ILO chaired the working group that drafted the joint statement and delivered it on behalf of the other organizations and agencies.

128. To ensure effective follow-up to the Fourth World Conference on Women after 1995, the ILO is already considering the preparation of some specific proposals for action.

2. Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations

129. In the fall of 1993, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) launched the programme "FAO Assistance in Support of Rural Women in Preparation for the Fourth World Conference on Women" in order to provide technical and financial support to several Member States in their preparations for Beijing. A total of 16 countries or areas have participated in the programme: Peru, Honduras, the Eastern Caribbean, El Salvador, Egypt, Lebanon, Tunisia, Burkina Faso, Benin, Congo, Zimbabwe, Uganda, Tanzania, Namibia, Cameroon and the Philippines.

130. Phase I of the programme provides support for (a) the preparation of sectoral reports on women in agriculture and rural development and (b) consultative workshops to discuss critical issues affecting rural women that should be addressed in the report.

131. Phase II of the programme seeks to strengthen national capacity to implement the draft Platform for Action that will be adopted by the Conference. To that end, Phase II provides support to ministries of agriculture to improve information on women's contribution to agriculture in order to influence a more gender-sensitive approach to policies, programmes and projects.

132. To complement those activities, FAO has developed a project to improve the collection and dissemination of gender-disaggregated data on agriculture and rural development by means of agriculture censuses and surveys. Under the project, national case studies on improving gender disaggregated data were prepared for several countries in the Near East (Turkey, Egypt, Syria, Pakistan and Sudan). Those reports were discussed at a workshop held in Cairo from 26 to 28 July 1994. Based on the results of the workshop, guidelines for the production and dissemination of data disaggregated by gender will be produced for analogous undertakings in other countries in the Near East and for similar activities in other regions of the world.

133. A regional synthesis report for Africa is currently being prepared by FAO based on the sectoral reports of the eight African countries participating in Phase I activities (Zimbabwe, Namibia, the United Republic of Tanzania, Congo, Benin, Burkina Faso, Cameroon and Uganda). Both the regional synthesis report and the national sectoral reports will be sent to ECA and presented at the Regional Conference in Dakar. It is hoped that the issues raised in those reports will then be incorporated into the regional plan of action for the advancement of women in Africa.

134. In addition, the FAO Office for Africa (RAFR) is in the process of organizing a one-day meeting prior to the Regional Conference to discuss the national sectoral reports as well as the regional synthesis report. Based on those discussions, resolutions and a follow-up strategy will be prepared in order to facilitate implementation of the plan of action for Africa.

135. The FAO for Asia and the Pacific (RAPA) presented a statement on FAO activities in the region at the Regional Preparatory Conference in Jakarta. A small exhibition of photographs, charts and FAO publications were also displayed at the Conference.

136. The FAO Office for Europe (REUR) has also initiated a project to compile data and information and prepare country profiles on women's role in agriculture and rural development in selected countries of the central and eastern European subregion. The project will provide gender disaggregated data to support the formulation of rural development programmes and policies at the national level. A total of 10 countries have received assistance from FAO in the European region and include Croatia, the Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Lithuania, Poland, Slovakia, Slovenia, Latvia and Bulgaria.

137. In addition, REUR is organizing a one-day regional consultative meeting to discuss the findings of the reports and to produce recommendations on the mechanisms and policies required to address the needs of rural women in the region. The recommendations will then be presented at the Regional Conference in Vienna.

138. Support for the preparation of sectoral reports on women in agriculture and rural development has been provided by the FAO Office for Latin America and the Caribbean (RLAC) to several additional countries in the region, including Mexico, Costa Rica, Chile and Venezuela.

139. RLAC is also in the process of preparing a regional document that analyses the situation of rural women in the region during the period 1985-1995. The document will be based on the national reports prepared for the World Conference, including the sectoral reports on women in agriculture and rural development, as well as on the outputs of a subregional workshop on women, rural development and decentralization processes, to be held in Caracas from 23 to 25 August 1994. RLAC is organizing a meeting in Mexico to review the draft document and, based on those discussions, a revised report will be presented and discussed at the Regional Conference in Mar del Plata and included in the regional report to be presented at the World Conference.

140. FAO is also in the process of publishing a case study on women in the Peruvian Amazon, which was an additional output of Phase I activities in preparation for the Conference. The case study analyses the situation and roles of women in the social and economic context of the Peruvian Amazon. Included in the report are actions that need to be taken on a variety of fronts to raise the status of women in the region.

141. Support for the preparation of sectoral reports on women in agriculture and rural development has been provided to an additional 17 countries by the FAO Office for the Near East (RNEA) under the Regional Programme of Action for Women in Agriculture in the Near East (RPAWANE). The countries participating in the exercise are: Cyprus, Egypt, Islamic Republic of Iran, Iraq, Jordan, Lebanon, Mauritania, Morocco, Oman, Pakistan, Somalia, the Sudan, Syria, Tunisia, Turkey, United Arab Emirates and Yemen.

142. The RPAWANE reports will be consolidated into a synthesis report on women in agriculture in the Near East and submitted to ESCWA as a regional input to the World Conference. The recommendations of the synthesis report will then be translated into a Plan of Action for Women in Agriculture in the Near East that would cover the next decade (1996-2005). RNEA also plans to hold a meeting to bring together all country coordinators, relevant United Nations agencies, and selected non-governmental organizations to review the synthesis report and enrich the draft Plan of Action through a participatory approach. Once endorsed, the Plan will guide future RENA work and orientations based on the priorities and need-driven requirements of the countries of the region.

143. The Women in Agricultural Production and Rural Development Service has also developed an internal information campaign to inform FAO staff about the Conference and to encourage their contribution to preparatory activities.

3. World Health Organization

144. The Global Commission on Women's Health met from 13 to 15 April 1994 at the headquarters of WHO in Geneva under the Chairmanship of Senator Patricia Giles of Australia. The Secretary-General of the Fourth World Conference on Women, a member of the Global Commission, participated in the meeting. The Global Commission on Women's Health is an advocacy, advisory and supportive body to WHO and relevant agencies of the United Nations system working with WHO on women's health.

145. The following were agreed upon at the first meeting of the Global Commission:

(a) A framework for addressing women's health issues that takes a holistic view of women's health throughout their lifespan and in all regions of the world. The framework takes as its starting-point six issue areas that are considered as pointers to the main health problems women face: nutrition, reproductive health, violence against women, ageing, lifestyle-related health conditions, and the work environment;

(b) The key role of the Global Commission as a powerful political body informing, advocating and proposing actions to ensure that women's health issues remain a priority on national and international agendas and in the media and that inequities based on gender will be eliminated;

(c) Women's right to health as a human right that should be incorporated in existing treaty bodies and instruments;

(d) The identification of gaps in information on women's health and an outline for an action programme aimed at improving the quality of life and health security of women at all periods in their lifespan.

The Global Commission chose as one of its mottos that "No women should die in childbirth".

146. WHO has also accelerated activities focused on improving women's health in a number of areas as an integral component of its preparation for the World Conference. Efforts include collecting and disseminating sex-disaggregated data on women's health, and building up information resource centres on women's health to service countries and agencies. Ongoing activities have also been accelerated in such areas as women's health and AIDS; research in human reproduction; the promotion of women's leadership; and women's health, especially adolescent health, reproductive health and, more recently, the emerging issue of the health of refugee women.

147. Regional and country activities have been fostered. For example, a meeting was held in the European Region on the theme "Women's health counts", focusing on women's health in the countries of central and eastern Europe. Reports have been prepared in a number of WHO regions for the regional preparatory conferences for the Fourth World Conference on Women, including a report entitled "Old problems, new issues: women's health in Latin America and the Caribbean". WHO is collaborating with many institutions and non-governmental organizations, such as the International Development Research Centre and the Arab Alliance, to organize workshops, training seminars and other actions that are action-oriented and are aimed at strengthening countries' capacities to improve women's health.

4. United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization

148. Education and capacity-building for girls and women at all levels and in all fields, together with incentives for a broader participation by women in cultural life, research and communication, are the main areas of UNESCO concern in preparing for the Fourth World Conference on Women and beyond. Particular attention is given to the most vulnerable groups among women and girls.

149. A network of focal points on women has been established among the UNESCO national commissions. Through that network, as well as through its regional and subregional offices, UNESCO expects to reach a broader constituency of professionals within the UNESCO field of competence. Subregional preparatory conferences are being organized by national commissions, supported through the UNESCO participation programme.

150. The newly established UNESCO Consultative Committee on Women, chaired by the Director-General, is expected to bring fresh insights and approaches to assisting in the preparation of the Conference and in the formulation of a new post-Beijing strategy and policy.

151. Among specific UNESCO activities in preparation for the Conference are:

(a) Three meetings of the UNESCO Consultative Committee on Women, the first of which took place on 21 and 22 April 1994;

(b) A high-level consultation on women's contribution to the culture of peace, to be held in spring 1995;

(c) An international symposium on the theme "Women and media, access to expression and decision-making", to be held in February 1995 in Toronto;

(d) A consultation on education for development for women and out-of-school girls in the least developed countries, to be held in Paris in December 1994;

(e) The preparation of a global plan of action for girls' and women's education;

(f) The celebration of International Literacy Day on 8 September 1995 in Beijing, with laureates of UNESCO literacy prizes for newly literate as well as highly literate women;

(g) The organization of round tables in the framework of the non-governmental organizations Forum on violence and sexual exploitation, women in Islamic countries and women and higher education.

152. UNESCO is continuing a publication programme specifically geared towards the Conference, as well as issuing other publications with a special emphasis on women and girls.

5. United Nations Industrial Development Organization

153. The United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO) is in the process of preparing its contribution to the Fourth World Conference on Women within the framework of its mandate. At the General Conference of UNIDO held in Yaoundé, Cameroon in 1993, UNIDO reaffirmed in its resolution GC.5/Res.11 the importance of the integration of women in industrial development and requested the Director-General to contribute to the preparations for the Fourth World Conference on Women by highlighting issues relating to women in industrial development. Through the restructuring of the UNIDO secretariat and a streamlining of the activities of the organization, UNIDO will pay continued attention to the gender dimensions. In 1994, the Director-General of UNIDO established an internal task force on the preparations for the World Conference.

154. In response to the request of its General Conference, a global study entitled "Participation of women in manufacturing: patterns, determinants and future trends" was completed in 1993. It is considered as one of the effective tools for UNIDO to create a typology of women's involvement in the economy with particular reference to the manufacturing sector. As an input to the regional preparatory meetings for the World Conference, UNIDO is currently undertaking the same analysis at the regional level in cooperation with the regional commissions. A draft report for the ESCAP region was submitted to the Second Asian and Pacific Ministerial Conference on Women in Development, held in Jakarta from 7 to 14 June 1994. It includes proposed strategies and plans of action for each of the groupings identified in the study.

155. UNIDO will strengthen its cooperation with the non-governmental organizations in order to fully reflect the situation and needs of women at all levels of industrial development from the policy-level to the programme and

project levels. UNIDO has actively been involved in that endeavour: it participated in the non-governmental organizations Forum at the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development and the ESCAP symposium of non-governmental organizations on women in development held in Manila in November 1993. UNIDO, in cooperation with a regional non-governmental organization, plans to establish at the non-governmental organizations Forum at the Conference an exhibition booth on women and technology. In addition, UNIDO will organize jointly with the Yokohama Women's Forum an Expert Group Meeting on Women Entrepreneurs in Sustainable Economic Development in Yokohama, Japan, in October 1994.

III. NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS

156. Under the leadership of Khunying Supatra Masdit, the Convener of the Forum, the non-governmental organizations Forum on Women '95 has continued its preparatory activities since the thirty-eighth session of the Commission on the Status of Women in March 1994. The preparations are aimed at ensuring the involvement of non-governmental organizations at all levels in the formulation of the draft Platform for Action and organizing a substantive non-governmental organizations Forum in Beijing.

157. The Forum structure is composed of a Planning Committee, Facilitating Committee and secretariat. The Planning Committee, which is the programme advisory body of the Forum, has been expanded to include 276 non-governmental organizations. The Facilitating Committee acts as the executive body. It is composed of the Convener as chair, the Executive Director, the President of the Conference of Non-Governmental Organizations (CONGO), the Coordinator of the non-governmental organizations Forum in Nairobi, a representative of the China Organizing Committee, the chairs of the non-governmental organization Committees on the Status of Women in New York, Vienna and Geneva, and two focal points from each of the United Nations regions. An Executive Director was appointed in February 1994. The secretariat provides support for regional and global non-governmental organizations activities and organizes the Forum in Beijing.

158. Unprecedented in the history of United Nations conferences and non-governmental organizations forum preparations has been the strong structure on the regional level. Regional focal points have been instrumental in forming non-governmental organizations working groups on the regional and subregional levels. Since preparations for the Fourth World Conference on Women began, non-governmental organizations have been an active force at all levels. At a national level, non-governmental organizations are engaged in providing input to national reports, drafting their own national reports from a non-governmental organizations perspective and organizing dialogues on gender issues. Regionally, non-governmental organizations are organized into working groups along issue lines. These regional working groups are also responsible for organizing the non-governmental organizations Forum parallel to each of the regional intergovernmental conferences being held in 1994. On the international level, non-governmental organizations are actively networking across issue and geographical lines to prepare their positions on the critical areas of concern identified in the draft Platform for Action, and raising public awareness about the Forum and the World Conference. Increasingly, non-governmental

organizations are being included in official government delegations, contributing to building greater dialogue between non-governmental organizations and Governments. The Forum works closely with the Conference secretariat to include the substantive participation of youth in all the preparatory activities.

159. Prior to the thirty-ninth session of the Commission on the Status of Women, non-governmental organizations will meet in New York on 13 and 14 March 1995 to bring together non-governmental organizations positions that have been developed at the regional non-governmental organizations meetings and other non-governmental organizations preparatory activities. A priority area for non-governmental organizations over the next year will be strengthening sections of the draft Platform for Action dealing with financial mechanisms and institutional arrangements, including post-Beijing structures.

160. Non-governmental organizations are also actively following the International Conference on Population and Development and the World Summit for Social Development to ensure that there are strong linkages among the three conferences, particularly since the Fourth World Conference on Women will present an opportunity to build upon the agreements made in the two previous conferences.

161. In June 1994, the Facilitating Committee went on a working visit to Beijing to discuss arrangements for the Forum with the Non-Governmental Organizations Forum Committee of the China Organizing Committee. The site of the Forum will be the Beijing Workers Sports Services Centre, located approximately 20 minutes from the site of the World Conference. It was decided that registration for the Forum will begin in August 1994. About 25,000 participants are expected to attend the Forum, which is to be held from 30 August to 8 September 1995.

Notes

1/ United Nations publication, Sales No. E.89.IV.2.

2/ Ibid., Sales No. E.90.XVII.3.

Annex

CALENDAR OF EVENTS 1994-1995

1994

Dates	Event	Venue
1-6 August	Nordic Forum	Turku, Finland
22 August-7 September	Preparatory Committee for the World Summit for Social Development: second session	New York
Summer	NGO/ECE Symposium (proposed)	Geneva
September	UNESCO international meeting of experts on violence and sexual exploitation	Seoul
September	IPU meeting of women parliamentarians	Paris
5-13 September	International Conference on Population and Development	Cairo
19-23 September	Regional Non-governmental Organizations Forum for Latin America and the Caribbean	Mar del Plata, Argentina
22-25 September	ECLAC Regional Youth Consultation	Mar del Plata, Argentina
25-29 September	Latin American and Caribbean Regional Preparatory Conference	Mar del Plata, Argentina
26-27 September	ECE Intergovernmental Meeting to discuss the expected outcome of the European Regional Preparatory Conference	Geneva
10-14 October	Conference secretariat expert group meeting on "Development: promotion of literacy, education and training, including technological skills" (priority theme for the thirty-ninth session of the Commission on the Status of Women)	To be determined
13-16 October	ECE Regional Youth Consultation	Vienna
17-21 October	European Regional Preparatory Conference	Vienna
October	Regional Non-governmental Organizations Forum for Europe (proposed)	Vienna

30 October-1 November	ESCWA Regional Youth Consultation	Amman
6-10 November	Western Asian Regional Preparatory Conference	Amman
7-11 November	Conference secretariat expert group meeting on "Equality: equality in economic decision-making" (priority theme for the thirty-ninth session of the CSW)	New York
10-13 November	ECA Regional Youth Consultation	Dakar
13-15 November	Regional NGO Forum for Africa	Dakar
16-23 November	African Regional Preparatory Conference	Dakar
27-30 November	Round table on issues concerning the eradication of poverty (German Development Foundation in cooperation with the Conference secretariat)	Arusha, United Republic of Tanzania
5-9 December	Conference secretariat expert group meeting on peace: women in international decision-making (priority theme for the nineteenth session of the CSW)	New York
December	UNESCO consultation on education for development for women and out-of-school girls in the least developed countries	Paris
	INSTRAW Interregional Conference on Women, Environment and Health	Santo Domingo

1995

Dates	Event	Venue
16-27 January	Preparatory Committee for the World Summit for Social Development: third session	New York
16 January-3 February	Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women: fourteenth session	New York
January-March	Commission on Human Rights	Geneva

9-11 February	Council of Europe Conference in anticipation of the Fourth World Conference on Women: "Democracy and equality: Challenge or utopia"	Strasbourg, France
28 February-3 March	UNESCO International Symposium: Women and media, access to expression and decision-making	Toronto
6-12 March	World Summit for Social Development	Copenhagen
9-24 March	Non-governmental organizations consultation and meetings	New York
13-14 March	Nineteenth Inter-agency Meeting on Women	New York
15 March-4 April	Commission on the Status of Women: thirty-ninth session	New York
Spring	UNESCO high-level consultation on women's contribution to the "Culture of Peace"	To be determined
30 August-8 September	NGO Forum	Beijing
4-15 September	Fourth World Conference on Women	Beijing